

-----  
The United States Navy on the World Wide Web  
A service of the Navy Office of Information, Washington DC  
send feedback/questions to [comments@chinfo.navy.mil](mailto:comments@chinfo.navy.mil)  
The United States Navy web site is found on the Internet at  
<http://www.navy.mil>  
-----

Navy & Marine Corps Medical News #01-29  
30 July 2001

MN012901. Medical Service Corps Celebrates 54th Birthday  
MN012902. A Hand-Held Solution to the Paper Work Blues  
MN012903. Reserve Medical Personnel Aid Texas Community  
MN012904. Bethesda Dental Creates Bridge Between Industry and Prosthodontics  
MN012905. Operational Forces Liaison Office Opens at Pendleton  
MN012906. Beckwith Named 2001 Preceptor of the Year  
MN012907. HealthWatch: Breastfeeding: Mother Nature's Way to Keep Baby Healthy

-usn-

MN012901. Medical Service Corps Celebrates 54th Birthday  
By Aveline V. Allen, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery  
Washington, DC - The U.S. Navy will celebrate the 54th anniversary of the Medical Service Corps on Aug. 4, saluting the more than 3,200 active and Reserve men and women that make up the most diversified team in Navy Medicine.

"Our team of clinicians, scientists and administrators who make up the 32 different specialties in the Medical Service Corps play a vital role in carrying out the mission of the Navy Medical Department," said RADM Philip VanLandingham, MSC, director of the Medical Service Corps. "Maintaining the health and wellness of our active duty personnel and their families, as well as our retirees and their families, is the reason we exist, and we do it very well."

Today's Medical Service Corps can trace its roots to the Army-Navy Medical Services Corps Act of 1947. Initially, it was composed of four sections: pharmacy; supply and administration; optometry; and medical allied sciences. A women's specialist section, now known as medical specialists, was established by the Navy in the early 1950s. It was composed of dietitians, occupational therapists and physical therapists.

According to VanLandingham, one of the corps' best successes is the recent innovation of taking MSC services directly to the "deckplate."

"We have shown that having physical therapists and psychologists assigned to the medical staff on aircraft carriers has reduced the number of medical evacuations and lost man days for our Sailors," he said.

Other corps innovations include looking into the possibility of assigning physician assistants to special warfare units and, after special orthopedic training, to recruit training centers.

"Orthopedic injuries constitute a high volume of patient visits in our training centers in San Diego, Great Lakes and Parris Island," VanLandingham said. "This initiative will help address that large patient load and reduce the amount of time these young recruits are away from their units."

VanLandingham's vision for the MSC of the future is a corps that is a "catalyst for change and innovation for all the medical departments within the Department of Defense."

"The men and women of the Medical Service Corps will continue to lead the way in overcoming the many challenges that lay ahead and work towards

providing top quality care to our Sailors, Marines, retirees and their families throughout the world," he said. "I'm proud to be the director and I look forward to yet another great year."

-usn-

#### MN012902. A Hand-Held Solution to the Paper Work Blues

By Jan Davis, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

Bethesda, MD - The event became more cumbersome and time consuming each year - the Naval School of Health Science's Graduate Medical Education (GME) Selection Board reviewed reams of printed rosters, supporting documents, evaluations, and applications to make decisions about which medical officers would be selected for residency and fellowship training, including where graduating interns would go for their first assignment. Once the board had made its selection, GME administrators often spent over 20 hours deciphering sometimes illegible notes and entering the choices into a database.

There had to be a cure for these paperwork blues.

"The Navy was committed to a faster, more efficient way to complete the selection process and eliminate the extensive paperwork associated with the annual task," said Harriet Gordon, the deputy director of Navy graduate education.

As it turned out, the answer was in the palm of their hand.

Working with industry, the Navy developed an on-line system where GME applicants indicate their placement choices electronically by filling out an application on the NSHS Bethesda GME web site. Once the chair of each specialty selection committee has made their final selections, they enter the data into a handheld computer.

The handheld's software includes menus that drop down to let users read a placement file and modify it on the fly. Once placements are complete, the information is uploaded from the handhelds into a desktop computer database. The database entry that once took 20 hours or more now takes less than five hours.

"The time we saved using the handheld PDAs, has given me the opportunity to devote more time to the other areas of the GME selection board," said Cliff Taylor, the database information manager for Navy GME.

"With these devices, we eliminate an inefficient, and sometimes inaccurate, manual data entry process," Gordon said. "Our old data entry system was arduous. Now, we can quickly update the database at anytime throughout the board meeting."

-usn-

#### MN012903. Reserve Medical Personnel Aid Texas Community

By Spc. Luke Elliott, Texas National Guard

Weslaco, TX - The lingering smell of burning plastic greets visitors to a small community just outside La Joya, TX. The south Texas brushland "colonia" just 15 miles north of the Mexican border lacks a lot of the basic infrastructure taken for granted by most Americans. It's a community where many of the residents have no trash disposal, sewage system or running water.

For many, health insurance for their families is impossible. But for two weeks last month, Naval and Marine Corps Reservists joined the National Guard and Texas agencies to open a free DoD-sponsored clinic for the residents of the town and the surrounding county.

About 250 healthcare providers participated in Operation Lone Star 2001, offering preventative medicine, pharmaceutical services, dental maintenance and restorations, immunizations and diagnostic services. It's the fourth year DoD has sponsored the event.

"Many of the residents don't have access to medical or dental service

because of income status or lack of transportation," said Texas Secretary of State Henry Cuellar. "That's why we are reaching out to them."

Cuellar estimated there are up to 200,000 people in the area without health insurance.

By the end of the first week, the operation had seen 2,760 people and provided the local community with more than \$320,000 in free medical and dental care.

"We are expanding our capabilities this year to make sure that every individual who comes to our treatment sites sees a doctor or dentist," said Naval Reserve CAPT Bill Marland, commander of the operation. "We've increased our participation to about 250 medical and support folks, and we expect to be able to treat about a thousand more patients this year."

Texas State Senator Carlos Truan said the community is very grateful for the military's efforts in the valley.

"I walked through the Edcouch Jr. High School site and was extremely impressed with the amount of treatment and healthcare being provided," Truan said.

Plans are already being discussed for next year's Operation Lone Star.

-usn-

#### MN012904. Bethesda Dental Creates Bridge Between Industry and Prosthodontics

By JOSN Rebecca Whitney, National Naval Medical Center Bethesda

Bethesda, MD - Using an assembly line approach similar to the auto industry, National Naval Dental Center Bethesda's prosthodontics lab is improving its service while increasing efficiency and productivity.

The lab makes dentures, bridges and crowns for its dental patients.

"We're trying to imitate the business practices in place at most civilian laboratories," said CDR Stephen Iannazzo, DC, chief of removal prosthodontics. "Each person focuses on one aspect of the process at a time. It works in other forms of manufacturing. It should work for us, too."

The center began using the new assembly line approach earlier this month. The beauty of the system, said Iannazzo, is that the technicians are placed in the area they are most skilled in, which, in turn, will improve the quality of the product.

"With the old system, as work came in, we would assign a case to a particular technician who would complete the whole project on his own," said Iannazzo. "With that system in effect last year, we increased productivity 26 percent, but we felt we had hit a plateau. By changing the system we hope to rise to a new level of efficiency and productivity."

Iannazzo said this new system also allows him to monitor the progress of cases better as they go through the department from beginning to end. He is the last stop before the completed prosthesis leaves the department.

While all technicians will be cross-trained, there will also be a recognized expert in each specified area. "We hope to be an informal training establishment for our technicians," he said.

"We're able to work in an area we enjoy and are confident in our skills," said DT2 John Tapley, an advanced prosthetics lab tech whose favorite area is the metal work on crowns and bridges.

Annually the lab completes about 2,500 cases for the Naval Prosthodontic Dental School. Iannazzo hopes the efficiencies of the new system will allow the lab to increase its support to other areas of the National Naval Dental Center.

-usn-

#### MN012905. Operational Forces Liaison Office Opens at Pendleton

By Kimberly Dimo Prato, Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton

Camp Pendleton, CA - Marines and Sailors at Camp Pendleton who need administrative help with a medical situation now have a one-stop-shop to go to, thanks to a new initiative by Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton.

The Operational Forces Liaison Office consolidated the Fleet and Marine Liaison Offices. HMCS Charles Bilbo and HMC William Almaro, both from Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton, were in charge of setting up the liaison office and making the initiative work. Bilbo said Camp Pendleton is the first facility to merge the two offices.

"We have Marines in the office, and the Marine liaison deals with logistical issues, whereas we deal with medical issues," said Bilbo.

The office will help with setting up appointments, provide information on medical and limited duty boards, and assist with medical evacuations.

"If a Marine is not ready to deploy within a 24-hour period because of a medical situation or a vaccine not received, we arrange things directly with our medical to make this Marine operational," said Bilbo.

Almaro said the next challenge is to get the word out.

"The system is in place and now we are in the process of notifying the commands of this service," said Almaro.

-usn-

MN012906. Beckwith Named 2001 Preceptor of the Year

Camp Lejeune, NC - Katherine Beckwith, preceptor for the Alcohol Treatment Facility at Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune and the Substance Abuse Counseling Center at the Marine Corps' New River Air Station has been selected by the U.S. Marine Corps as this year's Preceptor of the Year.

Preceptors are responsible for directing and overseeing the professional growth of substance abuse counselors. Since 1997, Beckwith has been under contract to both the ATF at Camp Lejeune and the SAC at New River Air Station Jacksonville, and was nominated by both for her exceptional counselor training.

Camp Lejeune's nomination cited Beckwith for her energy, compassion, caring, perception and insight. The Marine Corps Air Station New River cited her for work with counselors in determining and developing methods to achieve the common goal of providing the best possible care for clients.

Beckwith is a certified clinical addictions specialist. She also has a private practice in North Carolina.

-usn-

MN012907. HealthWatch: Breastfeeding: Mother Nature's Way to Keep

Baby Healthy

By Aveline V. Allen and Nicole Deaner, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

Every parent wants a strong and healthy baby. Giving them good nourishment may be the single most important ingredient to ensuring they get a good start in life. And one of the first decisions parents must make is whether or not to breastfeed their baby.

Breastfeeding benefits both child and mother. When a mother makes a commitment to breastfeed, she is providing her baby with nature's best baby food. Studies have also found that breastfeeding helps mothers recuperate from childbirth and protects her against some illnesses.

Breastfeeding may be a natural function, but it's not necessarily a natural instinct for mothers. Classes, offered at many military treatment facilities, help women learn about the benefits as well as the techniques of breastfeeding. CDR Ava Abney, NC, an international board certified lactation consultant at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, VA, teaches mothers how to make breastfeeding more comfortable and help them stick with this healthy choice for babies. The bottom line reason for breastfeeding, she

says, is it "promotes health, prevents infant and childhood diseases, and saves healthcare costs."

#### Breast Milk: Good Nutrition for Baby

Breastmilk is an excellent source of nutrition for babies in their first year - particularly in their first six months of life. Breast milk contains just the right amounts of water, carbohydrate, protein, fat, digestive enzymes, minerals, vitamins, and hormones babies need to develop. The antibodies found in the mother's milk build the baby's immune system to protect them against infection and disease. It also aids in proper development and growth of the baby's brain as well as their digestion.

#### Quicker Recovery for Mom

There are numerous benefits for the mother when she chooses to feed her child naturally. They'll be able to lose weight more quickly after birth. It also lowers the risk of certain types of cancer and may help protect her against osteoporosis.

#### Breast or Bottle?

Mothers have two options when giving their baby her breast milk - directly from the breast or by using a breast pump and storing the milk in a sealed container for feeding the child with a bottle and nipple.

The process involves regular pumping of milk from the mother's breast, appropriate handling and storage of milk and sanitation and storage of bottles and nipples.

Most healthcare professionals suggest that a mother make a decision if she is going to feed the child directly from the breast or through a bottle and nipple. Switching back and forth in the first two months of the child's life may cause sucking and feeding problems.

#### The First Important Decision of a Lifetime

Whatever method of feeding a mother chooses for her child, it will be one of the most important decisions she makes for the well being of her baby.

-usn-

Editor's Note: August is National Breastfeeding Awareness Month.

-usn-

Navy and Marine Corps Medical News (MEDNEWS) is a weekly compendium of news and information contributed by commands throughout the Navy Medical Department.

Information contained in MEDNEWS is not necessarily endorsed by the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED), nor should it be considered official Navy policy.

MEDNEWS is distributed to Sailors and Marines, their families, civilian employees, and retired Navy and Marine Corps families. Further distribution is encouraged.

Comments and ideas for MEDNEWS are welcome. Story submissions are encouraged. Contact Jan Davis, MEDNEWS editor, at MEDNEWS@us.med.navy.mil; telephone 202 762-3218, DSN 762-3218, or fax 202 762-3224.